



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

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Prevent Mold Growth During the Summer Months

MADISON—With the arrival of warmer humid days, state health officials are encouraging people to learn about preventing mold growth in their homes in order to stay healthy.

“If you see mold growth or you detect a musty odor, you may have a mold problem,” said Bill Otto, Environmental Health Supervisor. “About 10% of people are allergic to one or more types of mold and may suffer allergic reactions, eye and respiratory irritation, infection and toxicity.”

Mold will not grow unless sufficient moisture is present. Molds grow abundantly in outdoor plant and soil materials, and they can produce spores that are normally found in both indoor and outdoor dust. Mold growth is familiar to most people when it is seen as a fuzzy patch or stain spreading across food or damp surfaces.

Occasionally, mold can be found in the bathroom, on a windowsill, shower curtain or wall, and that can be easily cleaned. Preventing mold growth requires controlling the moisture source. This may be as simple as using a dehumidifier or fixing a simple leak. Larger amounts of mold may require more extensive evaluation or repair.

“Before cleaning mold in your home, first understand why it's there and fix the problem causing the mold growth,” said Otto. “Mold needs a source of moisture - a thorough inspection by a trained house inspector can help identify the cause.”

Areas inside your home that have poor air movement and a source of moisture are likely areas for mold growth. Once the source of the moisture/water has been found, it should be taken care of to prevent future mold growth. You must either eliminate or ventilate the source of water or moisture that is allowing the mold to grow, and affected building materials, such as carpets or drywall, may need to be replaced. If this is not done, the mold may return. Homeowners are cautioned to seek professional assistance to remove and clean up larger amounts of mold.

Visit <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/ch/mold> for more information and resources regarding mold and mold remediation specialists, including lists of businesses in Wisconsin that do mold remediation and indoor air quality work.

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